CHAPTER 2

Reinstating Aboriginal placenames around Port Jackson and Botany Bay

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Background

In recent years a process to reinstate Aboriginal placenames in New South Wales (NSW) has been set in place. In doing so consideration has been taken of similar efforts elsewhere in NSW e.g. Armidale (Reid 2002) and in other parts of Australia e.g. Adelaide (Amery and Williams 2002). In NSW this reinstatement process has been led by the Geographical Names Board of New South Wales. Through their efforts Dawes Point (the southern foot of Sydney Harbour Bridge) became the first place to be dual-named as Dawes Point/Tar-ra in 2002. The next was South Creek in the Hawkesbury River district which took on the additional name of Wianamatta in 2003. During 2003 the NSW/Australian Capital Territory (ACT) Committee of the Australian National Placenames Survey (ANPS) began a process of reinstating Aboriginal names in the Port Jackson and Botany Bay area. Crucial to this process was research carried out by Val Attenbrow of the Australian Museum (2001, 2002; cf. chapter 1 this volume). One by-product of Attenbrow's interest in investigating the Aboriginal presence in Sydney was a careful assemblage of information on Aboriginal placenames including variant spellings taken down by outsiders from the earliest days of contact. The NSW/ACT Committee formed a subcommittee consisting of David Blair and the authors: one of their more important tasks was to review the evidence and attempt to reconstruct the original phonetic form of these placenames.

Written representation and phonetic accuracy

General discussion

Many Aboriginal words have passed into Australian English (Dixon, Ramson and Thomas 1990) but often there is a significant gap between the written representation and the original pronunciation.

First we will consider five terms that passed into Australian English and thus see actual examples of this gap.

Table 2.1: Some Aboriginal terms now in Australian English

	Term	Comment
1	<Dharawal [State Recreation Area]>	a language of the Illawarra cf. placename Thirroul
2	<Dharug [National Park]>	another spelling of the Sydney language Dharuk
3	<Garrawarra [State Conservation Area]>	
4	<quandong>	from Wiradjuri /guwandhaang/
5	<bombora>	from Dharuk /bumbora/ cf. Dharawal /bumbura/

The first term, <Dharawal>[1], is a fairly close rendering in spelling of the phonological shape of this term. However it is quite rare for a non-specialist to pronounce the word accurately. The initial sound, spelled as <dh>, is common enough in Australian Aboriginal languages and is referred to as a lamino-dental stop/plosive. It has a similar pronunciation to the <d> in the English word <width>. We would expect that only specialists in the study of Australian Aboriginal languages would give this pronunciation for the initial sound – everyone else would pronounce it as a 'normal d' as in <dog>. Even when the specialist gives the 'correct' pronunciation most people are not going to notice the difference. Although this and the following term <Dharug> may show <dh> they are likely to be pronounced as though they had been spelled <Darawal> and <Darug>. Considering next the vowels, these are usually pronounced by non-specialists in a way that, rarely if ever, coincides with the original. The vowels in <Dharawal> would very likely have been pronounced like the vowel in the English word <but> as would the first vowel of <Dharug>. The second vowel of <Dharug> would probably have been pronounced like the vowel in the English word <put>[2]. The final sound of <Dharug> was probably 'k' as in the English word <rook> which is in fact a good written representation of the second syllable of this term. So why is it spelled with a <g>? Phonologically[3] there is no contrast between /k/ and /g/ in most Australian Aboriginal languages, so there is no need to reflect such a contrast in the spelling. In English the contrast is crucial and the spelling reflects this.

The term <Garrawarra> may well have come from an original Aboriginal source in which the vowels were mostly like the vowel in <but>, but many people pronounce this term with the first and third vowels as for <a> in <apple>.

The next two terms, <quandong> and <bombora>, refer, respectively, to a type of fruit and to a kind of ocean wave formation (Dixon, Ramson and Thomas 1990). For these we know the phonological shape of each word and it can be seen that there is a considerable gap between written representation and the original pronunciation. For the first term the Wiradjuri (from central NSW) original has three syllables while the Australian English version has just two. The /dh/ of the original has been heard as /d/, the final vowel /aa/ is long (like <a> in the English word <father>), and the preceding vowel /a/ is short as in <but>. The other term, <bombora>, is sourced from Dharuk, the language of the Sydney area (Dixon, Ramson and Thomas 1990) but also has a Dharawal (south coast NSW) equivalent (Eades 1976). Whatever the original vowels might have been, the current pronunciation in Australian English is not the same as the original, with the first vowel being rendered as in <bomb> and the second as in <or>.

We turn now to some examples from Gamilaraay (north central NSW) (Ash, Giacon and Lissarague 2003: 237-8).

Table 2.2: Gamilaraay placenames

	Usual spelling	Dictionary entry
1	<Barwon [River]>	from /baawan/
2	<Boggabilla>	from /bagaybila/
3	<Pilliga>	from /biliga/
4	<Blue Knobby>	from /buluuy nhaaybil/
5	<Brigalow>	from /burrigila/
6	<Brewarrina>	from /burriwarranha/
7	<Dungalear [Station]>	from /dhanggaliirr/
8	<Timbumburi [Creek]>	from /dhimbambaraay/
9	<Collarenebri>	from /galariinbaraay/
10	<Goodooga>	from /guduuga/
11	<Coonabarabran>	from /gunabarabin/
12	<Coonamble>	from /gunambil/
13	<Gunnedah>	from /gunidjaa/
14	<Condamine [River]>	from /gundhimayan/
15	<Goonoo Goonoo>	from /gunu gunu/
16	<Gwydir [River]>	from /guwayda/
17	<Mirramanar [Station]>	from /murrumanamanaa/
18	<Narrabri>	from /nharibaraay/
19	<Wee Waa>	from /wii waa/

All these examples are placenames in use and are derived from Gamilaraay, a language well documented by Ash, Giacon and Lissarrague (2003). It is here that we can see the considerable gap between written representation, current pronunciation by most speakers of Australian English and the original. As we have already seen, the Aboriginal contrast between /dh/ and /d/ is not recognized – as in <Dungalear>, <Timbumburi> and <Condamine>. Another Aboriginal contrast, /nh/ versus /n/, is also not appreciated: /nh/ is like the <n> in the English word <tenth>. So the placename, <Narrabri>, originally began with a /nh/ while <Brewarrina>'s <n> was actually /nh/.

Most Aboriginal languages do not allow certain consonant clusters which are common in (Australian) English. These include /bl/ and /br/ so that <Blue Knobby>, <Brigalow>, <Brewarrina>, <Collarenebri> and <Narrabri> all had an additional syllable where a vowel 'intervenes' between the /b/ and the /l/ or /r/. Curiously the consonant cluster in <Coonabarabran> has no obvious basis in the original.

In the placename <Mirramanar> not just one but two syllables have been dropped from the original. In this and many other examples there is considerable discrepancy between the original vowels and those of a typical Australian English pronunciation. One of the few terms among these examples that very closely approximates the original is <Pilliga>. At the opposite extreme is <Blue Knobby> where a fancied resemblance to two English words has resulted in a major transformation of the original. For these examples we have the advantage of a careful account by trained linguists who have been through all available sources and reached a definite conclusion. But what if we could only rely on the modern spelling of the placename but then had to attempt to reconstruct the phonetic past? If we were guessing, these would be our guesses:

Table 2.3: Comparison of actual pronunciations with hypothetical pronunciations based on usual spellings

Usual spelling	Our guess	Actual
Barwon	bawON	baawan
Boggabilla	bOgabila	bagaybila
Pilliga	biliga	biliga
Blue Knobby	??	buluuy nhaaybil
Brigalow	bVRigVlV	burrigila
Brewarrina	bVRVARVNa	burriwarranha
Dungalear	DaN(g)VlVR	dhanggaliirr
Timbumburi	DimbAmbARV	dhimbambaraay
Collarenebri	gOlVRVNVbVRV	galariinbaraay
Goodooga	gVdUga	guduuga
Coonabarabran	gunabaRabURVN	gunabarabin
Coonamble	gunambVl	gunambil

Usual spelling	Our guess	Actual
Gunnedah	gANVDA	gunidjaa
Condamine	gOnDVmVN	gundhimayan
Goonoo Goonoo	guNu guNu	gunu gunu
Gwydir	guwayDV	guwayda
Mirramanar	miRVmaNa	murrumanamanaa
Narrabri	NaRVbURV	nharibaraay
Wee Waa	wiwa	wii waa

These are not wild guesses but are based on knowledge of the phonology of Australian languages in general and NSW languages in particular. To give just one example, it is quite rare for words in a NSW Aboriginal language to begin with /n/. Thus if we see a placename starting with <n> it is reasonable to assume that the original was another kind of nasal – perhaps /nh/or /ng/. This educated guess is captured by using <N> to represent an unknown nasal quality. The guess that an initial <n> is unlikely to be /n/ is borne out by the example of <Narrabri>, where <n> has been used although the original had /nh/ (note that the guesses use capitalisation differently from standard spelling). To capture a possible variation between /dh/ and /d/ we use <D>; once again the strong tendency is for words in NSW languages not to use initial /d/ as borne out by <Dangalear> and <Timbumburi> where the original was /dh/. Many Australian languages have two r-sounds, one like Australian English <r> and the other a tap/flap or trill, the latter as in Scots English. The examples from Gamilaraay demonstrate that the spelling of the placenames is by no means a reliable indicator. In <Brewarrina> the first r-sound is spelled as <r> but turns out to be a trill, /rr/, while the second r-sound is spelled as <rr> and happens to be the flap/trill, /rr/. In <Dangalear> and <Timbumburi>, <r> represents an original /rr/ in one case and /r/ in the other. For this reason one is often left with the uncertainty of <R> indicating an unknown rhotic quality. The representation of vowels raises major problems, some of which are set out in Thieberger (2005). In our view, of all the vowels <o> shows the greatest variability, so we address this is in a separate section.

- A   could be /a/ but not certain
- U   could be /u/ but not certain
- V   unknown vowel quality
- R   unknown rhotic quality /r/ ~ /rr/
- D   unknown anterior stop quality /d/ ~ /dh/
- N   unknown nasal quality /n/ ~ /nh/ ~ /ny/ (especially finally) ~ /ng/
- ?   not clear what we can say!
- O   (for the story of O see the next section)

The story of O

The <o> appearing in spellings of Aboriginal words shows perhaps the widest range of phonetic variants as set out in the following table. Most examples are drawn from Dixon, Ramson and Thomas (1990).

**Table 2.4: The variable phonetics of <o>**

billabong	<o> = /a/
Quondong (also spelled quandong)	<o> = /a/; <o> = /aa/
bombora	<o> = /u/
dingo	<o> = /u/
bora	<o> = /uu/
brolga	<o> = /a/
kurrajong	<o> = /u/
Yolngu; yothu	<o> = /uu/
bondi = 'club'	<o> = /u/
Bonalbo < /bunalbung/ (Sharpe 1995: 187)	<o> = /u/
Woonona	<o> = [u] as in <boot>

In sum, the spelling <o> has been used for the vowel qualities represented in the English words: *but, part, put, boot*.

The Sydney Harbour names

Background

Figure 2.1: Map detail of Sydney Harbour (from Attenbrow 2001, see also 2002: 8)
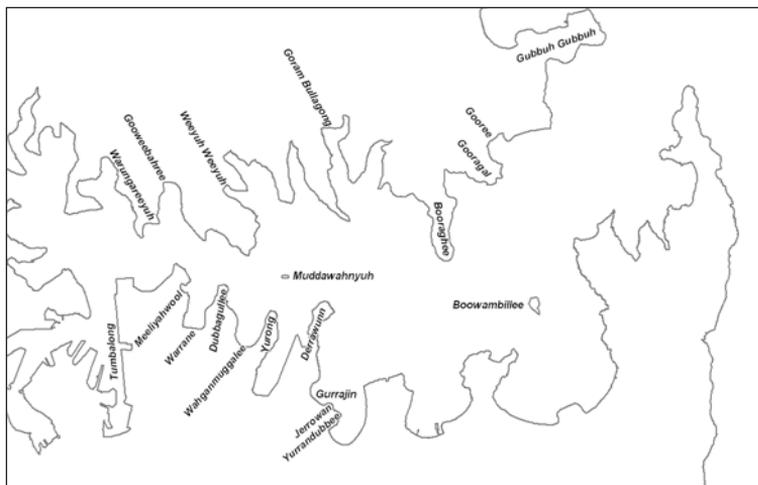
By now it should be abundantly clear that there can be considerable discrepancy between a written representation and phonetic accuracy. This poses particular problems for the Sydney Harbour area because the language of this area, sometimes referred to as Dharuk (Troy 1993) had fallen out of daily use during the nineteenth century. Unlike Gamilaraay where there is a strong base of documentation and one can call on older Aboriginal people for verification and assistance, for Dharuk the situation is more difficult. Nevertheless we have been able to draw on research by Attenbrow (2001, 2002) and Troy (1993) to strengthen our account.

Another task for the previously mentioned subcommittee (consisting of Blair and the authors) was to devise spellings which would encourage non-specialists to give as close a rendering to the phonetic original as possible. First we scanned the full range of spellings presented by Attenbrow (some sample spellings are given in Table 2.5 below) and attempted to make an educated guess about the phonetic original. As with the Gamilaraay exercise, for the Sydney Harbour region we can be quite confident about some and rather diffident about others. Basically the more capital letters and question marks the less clear we are about the phonetic original. It was partly on this basis that some possible candidates for dual naming ended up being culled from the list. Where the original phonetics was fairly well understood a suggested spelling was put forward. In October 2003 a meeting of representatives from Aboriginal communities with interests in the Sydney basin was convened at the Tranby Aboriginal Cooperative in Glebe. This meeting considered the list, the suggested spellings and the reasons for culling some potential dual naming candidates from the list.

Reasons for culling

We started with a list of potential candidates for dual naming and then went through a process of culling some of the names from the original list. Here we set out some of the reasons for culling:

1. Original pronunciation unclear
   Where the original pronunciation remains unclear we have recommended deferral of the placename in question until more research can resolve the issue. This applies to these places around Sydney Harbour: nos. 14, 17, 49, 51, 58, 21, 43, 47, 55

2. Already named
   One place, Dawes Point/Tar-ra, had already been dual-named: no. 41

3. Retain former spelling
   For three placenames we decided to retain the former spelling: nos. 18, 22, 50. Basically an existing spelling had become entrenched and it was

felt that there would be little chance of a proposed alteration being taken up; e.g. no. 22 Kirribilli is one of the best known Aboriginal placenames in Sydney. Notwithstanding that the phonetic original seems almost certain to have had an additional syllable, a practical approach was taken to retain an entrenched spelling even if it is 'incorrect'.

4. Remove to avoid confusion
   For another three placenames it was necessary to remove them so as to avoid confusion: nos. 40, 56, 59. The early sources indicate rather clearly that no. 40 should be pronounced like <coogee> but the place is Millers Point on the northern side of Sydney Harbour and this would be in competition with an established suburb name, Coogee, south of the Harbour!

The result of the culling process was to remove 16 names from an original 36 candidates. In this way 20 candidates for dual naming were eventually accepted and gazetted.

Table 2.5: The Sydney Harbour names (adapted from Attenbrow 2001; see also Attenbrow 2002: 9-13; drawing on Troy 1993)

VA ref	Reference spelling	Attenbrow spellings	Suggested phonetic original	Suggested spelling	Introduced name	Comments
11	Kuba Kaba	Kuba Kaba, Caba-caba, Ca-ba Ca-ba	gabagaba	gubber -gubber	Middle Head	some concern expressed by Aboriginal people because of a perceived connection with 'gubba' a term for 'white people' (Dixon, Ramson and Thomas 1990: 169) altered to gubbah gubbah
12	Koree	Koreé, Koree	gORi	goree	Chowder Bay	
13	Gurugal	Gurugal, Gurrugal	gARAgal		Chowder Head	
14	Taliangy	Taliangy, Tal-le-ongi-i	DaliyAngi		Bradleys Head/Middle Head	
15	Booragy	Booragy, Bürröggy, Burröggy or Broggy	buRagi	booraghee	Bradleys Head	
16	Goram bullagong	Goram bullagong, Gorambùllagong	goRambUlagOng		Mosmans Bay	
17	Wulworra-jeung	Wulworrá-jeung	wAlwORa-?		Robertson Point	
18	Kurraba	Kurrá bá, Kurrábá	gARaba	gahrabah	Kurraba Point	Retain former spelling
19	Wurru-birri	Wurru-birri	wARabiRi	warrabirrie	Kurraba Point (West)	
20	Weeawya	Wéyé Wéyé, Weeawya	weyeweye ??		Careening Cove	
21	Wudyong	Wudyong, Wudyong	wAdyOng		Wudyoung Point	
22	Kiarabilli	Kiarabilli, Kiarabily	giyaRabili		Kirribilli	Retain former spelling – although 'wrong'
23	Quiberee	Quibéreé, Quiberee	guwibARi		Lavender Bay	
24	Warrungarea	Warung area, Warrungarea	waRVngaRiya		Blues Point	
39	Tumbulong	Tumbulong and Go-mo-ra ?	DAmbAlOng		Darling Harbour	
40	Coodyee	Coodye	gudyi	coogee	Millers Point	Scrap 'cos confusing
41	Tar-ra	Tar-ra, Tarra, Tárrá	DaRa	Tar-ra	Dawes Point	Already adopted

VA ref	Reference spelling	Attenbrow spellings	Suggested phonetic original	Suggested spelling	Introduced name	Comments
42	Melia-Wool	Melia-Wool	mVliyawul		Campbells Cove	
43	Talla-wo-la-dah	Talla-wo-la-dah	DalawVlaDa		The Rocks (West)	
44	Warrane	War-ran, Weé-rong, Warrane, Warrang	waRVN		Sydney Cove	
45	Tobegully	Tu-bow-gule, Tubow-gule, Too-bow-gu-liē, Tobegully, Jubughalee, Jubùghallee	DVbVgali		Bennelong Point	
46	Woccanmagully	Woggan-ma-gule, Woccanmagully	wAganmagali		Farm Cove	
47	Cookaroo	Cookaroo	gugaRu	googahroo	Farm Cove Beach	
48	Yurong	Yu-ron, Yurong, Yourong, Yurong	yuRVN	yurong	Mrs Macquaries Point	
49	Mat-te-wan-ye	Mat-te-wan-ye, Mat-te-wan-ye	maDAwanyA		Fort Denison	
50	Wooloomooloo	Walla-mool, Wallamoula, Wooloomooloo	wAlAmUlA		Wooloomooloo Bay	Retain former spelling
51	Ba-ing-hoe	Ba-ing-hoe	baying-?		Garden Island	
52	Derawun	Derawun	DVRawAn		Potts Point	
53	Carraginn	Carraginn	gaRVdyin		Elizabeth Bay	
54	Jerrowan	Jerrowan, Jērrowan	dyVRVwan		Elizabeth Point	
55	Yarrandab	Yarrandab, Yarrandabby	yaRandabi		Macleay Point	
56	Kogerah	Kogerah	gUgVRa		Rushcutters Bay	? Scrap 'cos confusing
57	Yaranabe	Yaranabe	yaRanabi		Darling Point	
58	Be-lang-le-wool	Be-lang-le-wool, Billong-ololah, Billòng-olòla	bVlVng- ?		Clarke Island	
59	Wallara	Woo-lā-rā, Willárrá, Wallàra	wVlaRa	wallahra	Point Piper	
60	Boambilly	Bo-a-millie, Boam bill …. [word incomplete – document damaged], Boambilly	buwam(b)ili		Shark Island	

Determining the phonetic original

We are basing some of our guesses on Eades' (1976) observations about Dharawal/ Dhurga and neighbouring languages. Basically the phonemic inventory for Dharawal/Dhurga is indicated in Table 2.6; we have replaced Eades' symbols with ones that we consider to be more user-friendly.

Table 2.6: Phonemic inventory for Dharawal/Dhurga

b	dh	d	dy	g		vowels: i, a, u ± length
m	nh	n	ny	ng		
		l				
		r				
w			y			

Importantly there is no contrast in rhotics, so the decision about how to represent it/them should be based on purely practical considerations like readability by the average person. The contrast between /d/ and /dh/ is a concern because the sources for this exercise remain mute; e.g. nos. 14, 41. The vowel length contrast is also a problematic because we cannot make a definite decision about what is short or long based on these data. Finally the nasals can be tantalising. We suspect that the nasal in no. 44 is /ny/, but we cannot demonstrate this conclusively.

Some pragmatic principles for representing Sydney placenames

1. Disregard contrast in anterior consonants; i.e. /nh/ and /n/ written as <n>
2. Disregard vowel length; i.e. /aa/ and /a/ not distinguished.
3. Assume no rhotic contrast. Although many languages have this contrast apparently Dharawal and Dhurga do not (Eades 1976); see also Busby (1980).
4. Mostly disregard stress but try to place stress on the first syllable.

Table 2.7: The Sydney Harbour names – adoptions and exclusions

Suggested spelling	Adopted spelling	Introduced name	Comments
gubber-gubber	Gubbah Gubbah	Middle Head	Adopted. some concern expressed by Aboriginal people because of a perceived connection with 'gubba' a term for 'white people' (Dixon, Ramson and Thomas 1990: 169) altered to gubbah gubbah at request of Sydney basin meeting
goree	Gooree	Chowder Bay	Adopted
??	Gooragal	Chowder Head	Adopted
DaliyAngi	??N/A	Bradleys Head/ Middle Head	? Original pronunciation unclear – recommend deferral
booraghee	Booraghee	Bradleys Head	Adopted
	Goram Bullagong	Mosmans Bay	Adopted
wAIwORa-?		Robertson Point	Original pronunciation unclear – recommend deferral
gARaba	Gahrabah	Kurraba Point	Retain former spelling
wARabiRi	Warrabirrie	Kurraba Point (West)	??
	Weeyuh Weeyuh	Careening Cove	Adopted
wAdyOng		Wudyoung Point	??
giyaRabili		Kirribilli	Retain former spelling – although ''wrong''
guwibARi	Gooweebahree	Lavender Bay	Adopted
waRVngaRiya	Warungareeyuh	Blues Point	Adopted
DAmbAlOng	Tumbalong	Darling Harbour	Adopted
gudyi	Coogee	Millers Point	Rejected as confusing
DaRa	Tar-ra	Dawes Point	Already adopted
mVliyawul	Meeliyahwool	Campbells Cove	Adopted
DalawVIaDa		The Rocks (West)	??Original pronunciation unclear – recommend deferral
waRVN	Warrane	Sydney Cove	Adopted
DVbVgali	Dubbagullee	Bennelong Point	Adopted
wAganmagali	Wahganmuggalee	Farm Cove	Adopted
gugaRu	Googahroo	Farm Cove Beach	??
yurong	Yurong	Mrs Macquaries Point	Adopted
maDAwanyA	Muddawahnyuh	Fort Denison	Adopted
wAIAmUIA		Wooloomooloo Bay	Retain former spelling
baying-?		Garden Island	Original pronunciation unclear – recommend deferral
DVRawAn	Darrawunn	Potts Point	Adopted
gaRVdyin	Gurrajin	Elizabeth Bay	Adopted
dyVRVwan	Jarrowin	Elizabeth Point	Adopted
yaRandabi		Macleay Point	??

Suggested spelling	Adopted spelling	Introduced name	Comments
gUgVRa		Rushcutters Bay	? Rejected as confusing
yaRanabi		Darling Point	
bVlVng- ?		Clarke Island	Original pronunciation unclear – recommend deferral
wVlaRa	Wallahra	Point Piper	Rejected as confusing
buwam(b)ili	Boowambillee	Shark Island	Adopted

The meeting at Tranby in October 2003 expressed a general concern with the failure to provide 'meanings' or stories for the placenames. We were at pains to point out that some placenames may never have had a meaning or story associated with them and even if they had, that information may have been lost (see also Walsh 2002). However it is intended that any such information will be added to the database of NSW placenames – as it becomes available.

Balancing phonetic accuracy with a practical spelling

It will be clear that phonetic accuracy is not always possible but what is perhaps less obvious is that it might not even be desirable. Some spellings can seem forbidding to the non-specialist and this is obviously inimical to the aim of promoting the general acceptance of dual naming. Therefore there needs to be a balance between phonetic purism and what might be called toponymic pragmatism. The former is exemplified by some work carried out by Harold Koch on Aboriginal placenames in Canberra and south-east NSW (2002, 2005, this volume). The latter seeks to provide a written representation which closely approximates the original pronunciation (to the extent that can be determined) but which does not necessarily meet the expectations of specialists in linguistics. This is a practical approach motivated by a desire to make dual naming work. It is the approach preferred here (see also Nick Reid (2002) on creating Aboriginal placenames in the Armidale city area).

Conclusion

It is hoped that this adoption of Aboriginal placenames in the Sydney Harbour area will encourage attempts to reinstate Aboriginal placenames across NSW. In 2004-2005 a series of community consultations has been carried out at a number of centres: Coffs Harbour, Canberra, Wellington, Armidale, Lightning Ridge, Blackheath, Nowra – in 2004; Casino, Newcastle, Deniliquin, Coffs Harbour and Yass – in 2005. The Asia-Pacific Institute for Toponymy, on behalf of the ANPS NSW/ACT Committee, has supported these consultations with financial

assistance from the NSW Department of Aboriginal Affairs major grants scheme and from the Commonwealth through Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Services. These consultations have also benefited from assistance in planning and coordination from the NSW Aboriginal Languages Research and Resource Centre. We anticipate more of these consultations in the future and are hopeful that Aboriginal communities will foster proposals for new instances of dual naming in NSW.

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Endnotes

1. Spellings are shown in pointed brackets, <…>, while phonological material is shown in oblique/ slanted brackets, /…/.

2. Note that the two English words <but> and <put> do not rhyme despite their similar spelling. This is just one of the problems with English spelling (one 'just knows' which vowel sound goes with which word) which creates further problems when they are employed to represent another language.

3. Phonology looks at the sound distinctions which are meaningful <u>within</u> a particular language. In many Australian Aboriginal languages there is a meaningful contrast between /dh/ and /d/ while in English there is no such contrast. In English there is a meaningful contrast between /t/ and /d/ (<tale> versus <dale>) but there is no such contrast in most Australian Aboriginal languages.